

They've only given me 3 minutes to talk and I have a lot to say so forgive me if I just read through this quickly. We'll discuss all this more in the new business part of the meeting and you can always talk to me about it.

My name is Duane Thresher and I am a trustee nominee for Fairfield, Augusta, Fort Shaw and Helena. I live on a Fairfield farm with my wife and 5-year-old daughter. I have a PhD in a supercomputing field from Columbia University and NASA and a BS in electrical engineering and computer science from MIT. I used to work as a network engineer for a Department of Defense supercomputing facility but I now have a local business that networks buildings. I also have a lot of experience with rural and urban telecoms.

Although 3 Rivers prevented me from talking to most members, you might have seen my ads in the Acantha and Sun Times. They are very critical of 3 Rivers but I have a lot of detailed proof of everything I say in them.

Both personally and professionally I have had nothing but problems with 3 Rivers for years. Many of my neighbors and customers have related similar stories to those that follow.

For example, when I first came here I applied for an open technical position at 3 Rivers for which I was extremely qualified. They refused to even respond to me and gave the position to someone less qualified, probably a friend or relative and incompetent. I once was able to talk to Dave Gibson about this and he said would look into it but he never did. When they are not giving jobs to incompetent friends and relatives they are outsourcing jobs.

The incompetence of 3 Rivers has cost my company many hours and so a lot of money. 3 Rivers was created to support local businesses not hinder them.

Like you, my neighbors, customers and I have watched as the price of 3 Rivers service has increased year after year dramatically. And Dave Gibson admits that there is no end in sight for these price increases. 3 Rivers has tried to hide these increases or explain them away nonsensically. The real reasons for these price increases are several. For example, the services of a company with too many incompetent employees are of course too expensive. And then there are the extravagant giveaways in various forms, like letting employees run private businesses out of 3 Rivers, parties, straight giveaways, and buying the support of at least two newspapers with many unnecessary expensive ads.

3 Rivers email uses a spam filter that will block some emails to you without ever notifying you they were blocked. I discovered this when I tried to exchange emails with another business and they had to mail me a notice that their emails to me were being blocked. How much business has been lost by local businesses due to this? I had to get a non-3 Rivers email account for my business. Perhaps worse, in the last presidential election I could not receive emails from certain Republican groups because they were blocked by 3 Rivers.

You can't fix a badly broken company if the shareholders are uninformed and have no say.

3 Rivers has payed for at least two customer satisfaction surveys over the years. I even participated in one. Has anyone ever seen the results of these surveys? 3 Rivers has a website and provides email service, not to mention their expensive mailings and newspaper ads. Certainly they could have contacted members about this somehow. And 3 Rivers always advertises "tell us how we are doing". I've complained many times and never received a response.

The Board of Trustee elections are outrageous. There is no mailing for the call for nominees, only one newspaper ad. I talked to three of the supposedly-independent nominating committee and they all sent me to Lisa Brady, a 3 Rivers employee. Same thing happened last year. And only last year did they begin sending out absentee ballots as had always been required by the bylaws. Before that you could only vote if you could take the workday off and come to the annual meeting. One trustee and nominee works for and is a shareholder in the same company another trustee works for and this was not even noted. I asked to let trustee nominees contact all members via email and was refused. The ballots are not secret, scaring off voters. And I received two ballots so I think many members did. Who is going to count them and are they going to make sure members don't vote twice? Finally why can't voting in an ISP company be done online or by email?

You're probably asking what can just one trustee do? A major purpose of a corporation is to protect the officers of a company from personal liability. In return they must follow the bylaws of the company. If they violate those bylaws they become personally liable. Legal action can be taken against them. Dave Gibson could even be forced to resign.

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